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6TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

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August 6, 2014

Colonel Robert C. Wittig
Commander, U.S. Army Environmental Command
2450 Connell Road (Building 2264)
Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234-7664

RE: Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA) for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment

Dear Colonel Wittig:

I am writing to express my concern with the Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA) for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment's Proposed Action. This proposal could mean eliminating up to 16,000 military and civilian jobs at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), Washington. I believe that such a move would be detrimental to our national security and local economy and urge you to reject the proposed alternative.

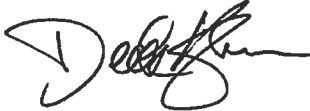
As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I'm concerned with the possibility of reducing force strength in the Pacific Northwest. Any reduction, especially one as large as 16,000 personnel, would negatively impact the Army's capability and may undermine the strategic rebalance to the Pacific. As indicated in the report, the reduction of two Brigade Combat Teams (BCT), 60 percent of the installation's non-BCT soldiers, and 30 percent of its Army civilian personnel would hinder the ability of the Army to provide forces to the Commander of the US Pacific Command if called on to do so. The number and presence of our servicemembers are direct signals to our allies and adversaries. Moreover, such a reduction would have a considerable impact on those who remain on duty.

Furthermore, having worked in economic development in the region for 10 years, I am acutely aware of the impact the Army, its workforce, and Joint Base Lewis-McChord have on our local economy. Our region is proud to be home to so many military families and missions. As the second largest employer in the state, a big part of our economy is based on this sector. The direct removal of 16,000 jobs from our workforce, and dislocation of their families, would be incredibly detrimental to the economic progress we have made over the past several years.

Furthermore, I take exception to the fact that the report narrowly observes the economic and social impacts of the proposed reduction to Pierce and Thurston counties. I am honored to represent Washington's 6th Congressional District and can vouch for the fact that a sizeable portion of the Army personnel, Army civilian workers, and their families proposed to be downsized live in Grays Harbor, Kitsap, and Mason Counties. The inclusion of these communities in the study would provide a more comprehensive portrayal of the economic consequences of implementing the proposed reduction.

At the federal, state, and local level, we have made significant investments in our infrastructure to welcome those who were relocated following the last Base Realignment and Closer (BRAC) Commission. It would be a shame if we fail to take advantage of the investments our nation and our community have made. Please know that I appreciate the work that you and your colleagues are doing to ensure that the Army is properly sized to support our national security interests. I respectfully request that you take these words into consideration and not adopt the report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Derek Kilmer', with a stylized, cursive script.

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor, State of Washington
 The Honorable Patty Murray, U.S. Senator, State of Washington
 The Honorable Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senator, State of Washington
 The Honorable Denny Heck, 10th Congressional District, State of Washington
 John J. Caulfield, Chair, South Sound Military & Communities Partnership Steering Committee